

What is claimed is

1. A thickening composition comprising  
(a) 10-50 % by weight, based on the total composition (a) + (b), of a crosslinked hydrophilic water soluble or swellable liquid dispersion polymer and  
(b) 50-90 % by weight, based on the total composition (a) + (b), of a crosslinked polymer or copolymer of an unsaturated carboxylic acid in powder form.
2. A composition according to claim 1 wherein component (a) is an anionic polymer.
3. A composition according to claim 2 wherein the anionic polymer is the polymer of an unsaturated carboxylic acid.
4. A composition according to claim 3 wherein the anionic polymer is poly(acrylic acid) or poly(methacrylic acid).
5. A composition according to claim 3 or 4 containing the polymer of an unsaturated carboxylic acid wherein 55-90 % of the carboxylic acid groups are in the form of an alkali metal salt or ammonium salt.
6. A composition according to any of the preceding claims wherein component (b) is made by precipitation polymerization.
7. A composition according to any of the preceding claims wherein component (b) is a crosslinked poly(acrylic acid) or a crosslinked poly(methacrylic acid).
8. A composition according to any of the preceding claims containing additionally (c) a hydrophobic liquid.
9. A composition according to claim 8 containing mineral oil or paraffin oil as component (c).
10. A composition according to claim 8 containing 40 to 80 % by weight of component (c), based on the total composition (a) + (b) + (c).

11. A printing paste prepared by using a thickening composition according to claim 1.
12. A printing paste according to claim 11 containing at least one dye.
13. A printing paste according to claim 11 or 12 containing at least one reserving agent.
14. A printing paste according to claim 11, 12 or 13 containing at least one agent to protect the print against the action of chlorine.
15. A process for the multicolour jet-printing of textile materials characterised in that the material is printed with an aqueous printing paste containing dyes and a thickening composition according to claim 1.
16. A process according to claim 15 characterised in that the pH of the aqueous printing paste is  $\leq 5$ .